

Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 L-02 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 EB-07

COME-00 TRSE-00 AID-05 IGA-01 H-02 OMB-01 /069 R

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PM/SAS-G. SWEANY

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ARA/PAF - MR. FIMBRES(SUBSTANCE)

ARA/PLC-PM-COL. QUIGG

----- 089593

P 251407Z MAR 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY CARACAS PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, MILI, VE

SUBJECT: REPORTED VENEZUELAN PURCHASE OF MILITARY
TRANSPORT EQUIPMENT

1. REGARDING VENEZUELAN INTEREST IN \$51.1 MILLION WORTH
OF BRIDGING EQUIPMENT, FOLLOWING FOR BACKGROUND
INFORMATION BUT MAY BE USED AT DISCRETION OF POST:

A. VENEZUELAN EMBASSY NOTE OF OCTOBER 23, 1974 REQUESTED
PRICE AND AVAILABILITY DATA ON A LIST OF DEFENSE ARTICLES
INCLUDING TEN SETS OF MOBILE ASSAULT BRIDGING (MAB) EACH
COMPOSED OF "EIGHT INTERIOR SPAN UNITS AND FOUR END SPAN
UNITS (RAMPS)". EACH OF THESE TEN SETS INCLUDES A TOTAL
OF TWELVE SPAN UNITS. EACH SPAN UNIT COMES WITH ITS
INDIVIDUAL BRIDGE TRANSPORTER, FOR A TOTAL OF 120
TRANSPORTERS. BRIDGE TRANSPORTERS ARE SPECIALIZED
VEHICLES DESIGNED TO CARRY SPAN UNITS. EACH TRANSPORTER

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COSTS APPROXIMATELY \$150 THOUSAND.) TOTAL COST OF

BRIDGING AND RELATED EQUIPMENT IS INDEED \$51.1 MILLION.

B. DEPARTMENT NOTIFIED DOD OF ITS APPROVAL OF VENEZUELAN REQUEST AND AUTHORIZED FMS CASH SALE ON NOVEMBER 7, 1974.

C. DOD ASSIGNED ACTION ON VENEZUELAN REQUEST TO DEPARTMENT OF ARMY WHICH CONTACTED MILGP CARACAS TO CLARIFY REQUEST, IN VIEW OF UNUSUAL EXPENSE INVOLVED DEPARTMENT OF ARMY

SUBSEQUENTLY PREPARED LETTER OF OFFER FOR BRIDGING EQUIPMENT.

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D. LETTER OF OFFER HAS NOT BEEN TENDERED TO GOV REPRESENTATIVES BECAUSE SECTION 23 OF FOREIGN MILITARY SALES ACT REQUIRES THAT THE EXECUTIVE NOTIFY CONGRESS OF ALL LETTERS OF OFFER FOR DEFENSE ARTICLES OF MORE THAN \$25 MILLION IN VALUE AND ALLOW CONGRESS 20 DAYS TO CONSIDER PROPOSED TENDER OF LETTER OF OFFER. IN FEBRUARY, 1975, DEPARTMENT AND DOD GAVE THEIR APPROVAL THAT CONGRESS BE NOTIFIED AND ON MARCH 14, 1975 DOD SENT LETTER OF OFFER TO CONGRESS.

2. DEPARTMENT AND DOD CONSIDER THAT APPROVAL OF PROVISION OF PRICE AND AVAILABILITY DATA TO FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS AMOUNTS TO APPROVAL IN PRINCIPLE OF SUBSEQUENT SALE, AND SALES ARE ROUTINELY AUTHORIZED IN THIS WAY, WITHOUT FURTHER REFERENCE TO DEPARTMENT.

3. UPON APPROVAL OF DEPARTMENT AND DOD, DEPARTMENT OF ARMY ROUTINELY ISSUES PRICE AND AVAILABILITY DATA IN THE FORM OF LETTERS OF OFFER. THIS PRACTICE NOT ONLY REDUCES TOTAL PAPER WORK ASSOCIATED WITH FMS SALES, BUT ALLOWS REQUESTING GOVERNMENT TO HAVE USG COMMITMENT TO SELL ITEMS ON SPECIFIC TERMS AS WELL AS INFORMATION ON PRICE AND AVAILABILITY OF REQUESTED ITEM.

4. DEPARTMENT UNABLE TO LOCATE SPECIFIC SOURCE OF AP REPORT AND, IN VIEW OF GOV SENSITIVITY, HAS REFRAINED FROM CHECKING DIRECTLY WITH AP AND THUS CALLING ATTENTION TO STORY.

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5. HOWEVER, FOR INFORMATION POST, MORE THAN ONE FOREIGN COUNTRY HAS RECENTLY COMPLAINED TO DEPARTMENT OF PUBLICATION IN U.S. PRESS OF CERTAIN OF THEIR LARGE MILITARY PURCHASES, PUBLICATION WHICH MAY STEM FROM NEW NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENT TO CONGRESS NOTED ABOVE AS WELL AS FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT.

6. DEPARTMENT WOULD APPRECIATE ANY INFO POST DEVELOPS
ON WHY MOD IS PUSHING "FABRICATION" STORY.

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Message Attributes

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To: CARACAS
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